Export of sandstone and granite

60. SHRI KAILASH JOSHI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the countries which import sandstone and granite from India;

(b) the value of exports made during the last two years; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to boost the exports of sandstone and granite?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY) : (a) Sir, names of the principal countries, which import sandstone and granite from India, are :

Sandstone:	Belgium, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Oman, Australia, Bahrain, Chinese Taipei, China, Korea P.R., UAE, USA and UK.
Granite :	Italy, China, Chinese Taipei, USA, Belgium, Japan, Hong Kong, Australia, Singapore, Netherlands, Turkey and Germany.

(b) The value of exports made during the last two years is as follows :

(Value : Rs. Crores)

	Sandstone	Granite
2000-2001	56.93	1940.63
2001-2002 (Prov.)	113.30	2110.00

(c) Some of the measures proposed to promote export of Sandstone and Granite are :—

(i) CAPEXIL, an Export Promotion Council of Department of Commerce is undertaking vigorous export promotion efforts by way of organizing Buyer-Seller Meets (BSM). Some international trade fairs have also been started in the country and a new international trade fair to promote Indian granite will be organized in the month of January 2003 at Chennai jointly by Indian Monument Manufacturers Association and CAPEXIL.

(ii) Fairs and exhibitions will be organized in the country periodically so that decorative stones available in the State may get the desired publicity. Visits to national and international trade fairs, exhibitions and seminars will also be organized both for potential exporters and Government functionaries, which is expected to give the entrepreneures an opening in the national/international markets and provide a fillip to exports.

Free trade agreement with Sri Lanka

61. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Sri Lanka have agreed to expand the Free Trade Agreement and propose to include the service sector too in it;

(b) whether it is also a fact that preliminary studies are underway to have a road bridge between the two countries; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY) :

(a) to (c) During the visit of Sri Lankan Prime Minister to India between June 8-12-2002, it was agreed to set up a Task Force for "FTA II and Beyond" to include the service sector and impart renewed impetus and synergy to the FTA, and also to inititate a multi-disciplinary feasibility study regarding the proposed land bridge between the two countries. At the Senior Officials Meeting under the India Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 4—5 July, 2002 both sides have further agreed to communicate to each other the composition of Task Force, Sri Lanka undertook to prepare a concept paper with regard to "FTA II & Beyond" and the draft Terms of Reference, for the Task Force.

Import of leather item from India

62. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that certain countries have decided not to import leather items from India on account of bad treatment given to such cattle while they are on transit;